

Top Ten Things Men Can Do For Better Health



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www.milwaukee.gov/health

1. Eat healthier.

Eating right is important for weight control, as well as for getting the right kinds of nutrition.

- Add more fruits and vegetables to your daily diet. The **United States Department of Agriculture** suggests eating **1½-2 cups of fruit** and **2½-3 cups of vegetables** a day for boys and men depending on your age.
- Eat less red meat, replacing it with fish, white meat like chicken (baked, roasted, or poached) or beans or soy.
- Drink fewer sodas and sports beverages – these drinks can contain the amount of calories recommended for an entire meal, but do little to fill you up.
- Limit alcoholic beverages.



2. Go to the doctor.

Many men don't have a regular doctor. Men in Milwaukee are less likely to go to the doctor for routine checkups as compared to Milwaukee women. Annual check-ups are important for tracking your general condition and can help you detect health concerns early. **Many free and sliding scale clinics** are available throughout Milwaukee to help you get care.

3. Get active.

Experts recommend adults get 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week, and that children get 60 minutes of exercise on most days. Walking, jogging, playing sports like basketball, golf, or softball, dancing, and doing yardwork are all great ways of getting active and having fun.

- You don't have to exercise for the full 30 minutes straight to get the benefits of exercise. Experts suggest you can spread out these minutes throughout the day, as long as each exercise session is at least 10 minutes long.¹
- Remember: start slow to avoid injuries. You may want to talk to a doctor before starting new activities.



4. Get tested.

Annual exams and regular screening tests can help find health issues early, when treatment may be easier and more effective. **Recommendations for screening tests and when you should get them** vary based on your age and other risk factors. They also vary based on who you ask. Talk to your doctor about what he or she suggests. You may want to think about getting screened for sexually transmitted diseases. Some of these diseases can take months for symptoms to develop, and others may never show symptoms but still can affect your health and that of your family. Free STD screening is available at the **Keenan Health Center**.

5. Stop or limit smoking and chewing tobacco.

Tobacco increases your risk of heart disease, lung cancer, emphysema, oral cancers, and stroke, among other conditions. Stopping smoking can decrease your risk of these conditions within days or months. Because the nicotine in tobacco is addictive, stopping may not be easy. Help is available.

6. Pay attention to your stress level.

Money, parenting, work, health, relationships – all can create stress in our lives. Sometimes making sure to spend time relaxing, talking with friends, or on vacation can be helpful. Other times, the stress can be much more serious.

- Although few men seek treatment for it, many men report feeling depressed or anxious.
- Men who witness violence – in the home, in their neighborhoods, or in combat areas – report feelings of post-traumatic stress disorder.
- More men than women use alcohol and illegal drugs, which is sometimes related to stress.
- More men complete suicide than women, especially middle-aged men.

It is important to recognize feelings of severe stress, depression, and anxiety as important concerns. If you or someone you know is suffering from these feelings, **help is available**.

7. Get immunizations.

Adult men, as well as boys, should make sure their immunizations are up-to-date. Depending on where you work, where you travel, and your health status, certain immunizations are recommended. **The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) provides a recommended schedule of vaccinations for adults and children.** For children, the City of Milwaukee Health Department offers **free immunization clinics** at several sites.

- **Keenan Health Center:** Wednesdays, 8-11am
3200 N 36th St. 414-286-8840
- **Northwest Health Center:** Wednesdays, 3-6 pm; Thursdays, 8-11 am
7630 W. Mill Rd. 414-286-8830
- **Southside Health Center:** Mondays, 3-6pm; Tuesdays
1639 S. 23rd St. 414-286-8620



8. Protect yourself.

In the car, in the sun, or in bed – make sure you take steps to protect your health.

- Wearing a seatbelt is required by law, and can save lives. Since 2001, over 30,000 men each year have died in motor vehicle crashes. Studies have shown that using a seatbelt is the most important thing you can do to prevent death in case of a car crash.³
- Wearing sunscreen can help prevent the development of skin cancer.
 - Remember to put sunscreen on before spending time outside at a sports game, barbeque, or when doing yardwork.
 - If you are getting wet, sweating, or spending a long time outside, remember to put more sunscreen on.
 - Follow the directions on the package about when you need to put on more sunscreen.
- Wearing a condom during sex can help prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, Chlamydia, and Gonorrhea. It can also help prevent unwanted pregnancies.
- Wearing a helmet while riding your motorcycle or bicycle can save your life.
- Motorcycle riders who are not wearing a helmet are twice as likely to be hospitalized with a head injury as riders wearing a helmet as a result of a crash. There is also an increased risk of death for those not wearing a helmet.⁴
- Bicyclists who wear a helmet have a reduced risk of head injury, and those wearing a helmet who do get a head injury will have one that is less severe.⁵

9. Get to know your family history.

Knowing about the health of your parents, grandparents, and other relatives can be helpful for you and your doctor to help track your risk for some diseases and other health conditions. If you can, ask relatives about your family's health, write it down or record it, and tell a doctor about your family history.

10. Brush your teeth.

Dental health matters throughout your life. Brushing your teeth 2-3 times a day, flossing, and seeing a dentist 1-2 times a year can help prevent cavities, gum disease, and other conditions. **There are several free or reduced fee dental providers in the Milwaukee area.**



Web Resources

Here are the links used in the list above if you are reading this as a printed copy.

1. Eat healthier.

- <http://www.mypyramid.gov/index.html>
- http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits_counts_table.html
- http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/vegetables_counts_table.html

2. Go to the doctor.

- Free and low-cost clinics in the Milwaukee area:
http://www.milwaukee.gov/Health_care_guide_1009.pdf

4. Get tested.

- http://www.milwaukee.gov/Screening_Checklist_Tool_Men.pdf
- <http://www.milwaukee.gov/clinics>

5. Stop or limit smoking and chewing tobacco.

- <http://www.ctri.wisc.edu/home/quit.line.home.html>
- <http://www.becomeanex.org>
- <http://www.smokefree.gov>

6. Pay attention to your stress level.

- http://www.milwaukee.gov/Mental_health_resources.pdf

7. Get immunizations.

- <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/downloads/adult/07-08/adult-schedule-11x17.pdf>
- <http://www.milwaukee.gov/immunizations>

10. Brush your teeth.

- Free and low-cost dental care in the Milwaukee area:
http://www.milwaukee.gov/dental_care.pdf

References

1. Haskell WL, Lee I, Pate RR, Powell KE, Blair SN, Franklin BA, et al. Physical Activity and public health: updated recommendations for adults from the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association. *Med Sci Sports Exercise*. 2007;39(8):1423-1434.
2. US Centers for Disease Control. 1999 - 2005, United States Unintentional Overall Motor Vehicle Deaths and Rates per 100,000. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/>.
3. Dinh-Zarr TB, Sleet DA, Shults RA, Zaza S, Elder RW, Nichols JL, et al. Reviews of evidence regarding interventions to increase the use of safety belts. *Am J Prev Med*. 2001;21(48):48-65.
4. Ogle AJ, Tillotson EA. Should it be the law in Wisconsin that all motorcyclists are required to wear helmets? *J Trauma Nursing*. 2008;15(2):43-46.
5. Pardi LA, King BP, Salemi G, Salvator AE. The effect of bicycle helmet legislation on pediatric injury. *J Trauma Nursing*. 2007;14(2):84-87.

List informed by the US Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Tips for a Healthy Life for Men. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/men/tips/index.htm>.